

60,469-218
OT-5044REMARKS

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the remarks and analysis in the office action. Claims 1 and 15 - 16 are amended above. New claim 19 is presented. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this application.

Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is not anticipated by the *Mullis* reference. The *Mullis* arrangement does not include a step chain that is distinct from steps. Instead, the pallets of *Mullis* have spaced racks 25 that are part of the pallets, themselves. Therefore, there is no anticipation.

Claim 15 now contains subject matter previously presented in claims 16 or 17, which was indicated as allowable. New claim 19 presents the subject matter of claims 2 or 3, which was indicated as allowable, rewritten in independent form.

This case is in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,
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CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE

I hereby certify that this Preliminary Amendment relating to Application Serial No. 10/537,206, is being facsimile transmitted to the Patent and Trademark Office (Fax No. (571) 273-8300) on May 8, 2006.


Theresa M. Palmateer